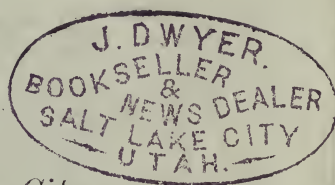


DISCOURSES

ON

CELESTIAL MARRIAGE

DELIVERED IN THE



New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

OCTOBER 7TH, 8TH AND 9TH, 1869,

BY

ELDER ORSON PRATT,

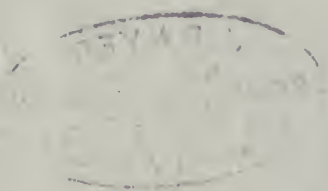
PRESIDENT GEORGE A. SMITH,

AND

ELDER GEORGE Q. CANNON.

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DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BY

ELDER ORSON PRATT,

IN THE NEW TABERNACLE, SALT LAKE CITY, OCTOBER 7TH, 1869.

It was announced at the close of the forenoon meeting that I would address the congregation this afternoon upon the subject of Celestial Marriage; I do so with the greatest pleasure.

In the first place, let us inquire whether it is lawful and right according to the Constitution of our country, to examine and practice this Bible doctrine? Our fathers, who framed the Constitution of our country devised it so as to give freedom of religious worship of the Almighty God; so that all people under our Government should have the inalienable right,—a right by virtue of the Constitution,—to believe in any Bible principle which the Almighty has revealed in any age of the world to the human family. I do not think however that our forefathers, in framing that instrument, intended to embrace all the religions of the world. I mean the idolatrous and pagan religions. They say nothing about those religions in the Constitution; but they give the express privilege in that instrument to all people dwelling under this Government and under the institutions of our country, to believe in all things which the Almighty has revealed to the human family. There is no restriction nor limitation so far as Bible religion is concerned, or any principal or form of religion believed to have emanated from the Almighty; yet they would not admit idolatrous nations to come here and practice their religion, because it is not included in the Bible; it is not the religion of the Almighty. Those people worship idols, the work of their own hands, they have instituted rights and ceremonies pertaining to those idols, in the observance of which they, no doubt, suppose they are worshipping correctly, and sincerely, yet some of them are of the most revolting and barbarous character. Such, for instance, as the offering up of a widow on a funeral pile, as a burnt sacrifice, in order to follow her husband into the eternal worlds. That is no part of the religion mentioned in the Constitution of our coun-

try, it is no part of the religion of Almighty God.

But confining ourselves within the limits of the Constitution, and coming back to the religion of the Bible, we have the privilege to believe in the Patriarchal, in the Mosaic, or in the Christian order of things; for the God of the patriarchs, and the God of Moses is also the Christians' God.

It is true that many laws were given under the Patriarchal or Mosaic dispensations, against certain crimes, the penalties for violating which, religious bodies, under our Constitution, have not the right to inflict. The Government has reserved, in its own hands, the power, so far as affixing the penalties of certain crimes is concerned.

In ancient times there was a law strictly enforcing the observance of the Sabbath day, and the man or woman who violated that law was subjected to the punishment of death. Ecclesiastical bodies have the right, under our Government and Constitution, to observe the Sabbath day or to disregard it, but they have not the right to inflict corporeal punishment for its non-observance.

The subject proposed to be investigated this afternoon is that of Celestial Marriage, as believed in by the Latter-day Saints, and which they claim is strictly a Bible doctrine and part of the revealed religion of the Almighty. It is well known by all the Latter-day Saints that we have not derived all our knowledge concerning God, heaven, angels, this life and the life to come entirely from the books of the Bible; yet we believe that all of our religious principles and notions are in accordance with and are sustained by the Bible; consequently, though we believe in new revelation, and believe that God has revealed many things pertaining to our religion, we also believe that He has revealed none that are inconsistent with the worship of Almighty God, a sacred right guaranteed to all religious denominations by the Constitution of our country.

God created man, male and female. He is the Author of our existence. He placed us on this creation. He ordained laws to govern us. He gave to man, whom he created, a helpmeet,—a woman, a wife to be one with him, to be a joy and a comfort to him; and also for another very great and wise purpose,—namely, that the human species might be propagated on this creation, that the earth might teem with population according to the decree of God before the foundation of the world. That the intelligent spirits whom he had formed and created, before this world was rolled into existence, might have their probation, might have an existence in fleshy bodies on this planet, and be governed by laws emanating from their Great Creator. In the breast of male and female He established certain qualities and attributes that never will be eradicated,—namely, love towards each other. Love comes from God. The love which man possesses for the opposite sex came from God. The same God who created the two sexes implanted in the hearts of each love towards the other. What was the object of placing this passion or affection within the hearts of male and female? It was in order to carry out, so far as this world was concerned, His great and eternal purposes pertaining to the future. But He not only did establish this principle in the heart of man and woman, but gave divine laws to regulate them in relation to this passion or affection, that they might be limited and prescribed in the exercise of it towards each other. He therefore ordained the Marriage Institution. The marriage that was instituted in the first place was between two immortal beings, hence it was marriage for eternity in the very first case which we have recorded for an example. Marriage for eternity was the order God instituted on our globe; as early as the Garden of Eden; as early as, the day when our first parents were placed in the garden to keep it and till it, they, as two immortal beings, were united in the bonds of the New and Everlasting Covenant. This was before man fell, before the forbidden fruit was eaten, and before the penalty of death was pronounced upon the heads of our first parents and all their posterity, hence, when God gave to Adam his wife Eve, He gave her to him as an immortal wife, and there was no end contemplated of the relation they held to each other as husband and wife.

By-and-by, after this marriage had taken place, they transgressed the law of God, and by reason of that transgression, the penalty of death came, not only upon them, but also upon all their posterity. Death, in its operations, tore asunder, as it were, these two beings who had hitherto been im-

mortal, and if God had not, before the foundation of the world, provided a plan of redemption, they would perhaps have been torn asunder forever; but inasmuch as a plan of redemption had been provided, by which man could be rescued from the effects of the Fall, Adam and Eve were restored to that condition of union, in respect to immortality, from which they had been separated for a short season of time by death. The Atonement reached after them and brought forth their bodies from the dust, and restored them as husband and wife, to all the privileges that were pronounced upon them before the Fall.

That was eternal marriage; that was lawful marriage ordained by God. That was the divine institution which was revealed and practiced in the early period of our globe. How has it been since that day? Mankind have strayed from that order of things, or, at least, they have done so in latter times. We hear nothing among the religious societies of the world which profess to believe in the Bible about this marriage for eternity. It is among the things that are obsolete. Now all marriages are consummated until death only; they do not believe in that great pattern and prototype established in the beginning; hence we never hear of their official characters, whether civil or religious, uniting men and women in the capacity of husband and wife as immortal beings. No, they marry as mortal beings only, and until death does them part.

What is to become of them after death? What will take place among all those nations who have been marrying for centuries for time only? Do both men and women receive a resurrection? Do they come forth with all the various affections, attributes and passions that God gave them in the beginning? Does the male come forth from the grave with all the attributes of a man? Does the female come forth from her grave with all the attributes of a woman? If so, what is their future destiny? Is there no object or purpose in this new creation, save to give them life, a state of existence? or is there a more important object in view, in the mind of God, in thus creating them anew? Will that principle of love which exists now, and which has existed from the beginning, exist after the resurrection? I mean this sexual love. If that existed before the Fall, and if it has existed since then, will it exist in the eternal worlds after the resurrection? This is a very important question to be decided.

We read in the revelations of God that there are various classes of beings in the eternal worlds. There are some who are kings, priests, and Gods, others that are angels; and also among them are the orders

denominated celestial, terrestrial, and teles-
tial. God, however, according to the faith
of the Latter-day Saints, has ordained that
the highest order and class of beings that
should exist in the eternal worlds should
exist in the capacity of husbands and wives,
and that they alone should have the privi-
lege of propagating their species,—intelli-
gent immortal beings. Now it is wise, no
doubt, in the Great Creator to thus limit this
great and Heavenly principle to those who
have arrived or come to the highest state of
exaltation, excellency, wisdom, knowledge,
power, glory and faithfulness, to dwell in
His presence, that they by this means shall
be prepared to bring up their spirit off-
spring in all pure and holy principles in
the eternal worlds, in order that they may
be made happy. Consequently He does
not entrust this privilege of multiplying
spirits with the terrestrial or teles-
tial, or the lower order of beings there, nor with
angels. But why not? Because they have
not proved themselves worthy of this great
privilege. We might reason, of the eternal
worlds, as some of the enemies of polyga-
my reason of this state of existence, and
say that there are just as many males as
females there, some celestial, some terres-
trial, and some teles-
tial; and why not have
all these paired off, two by two? Because
God administers His gifts and His bless-
ings to those who are most faithful, giving
them more bountifully to the faithful, and
taking away from the unfaithful that with
which they had been entrusted, and which
they had not improved upon. That is the or-
der of God in the eternal worlds, and if such
an order exists there, it may in a degree ex-
ist here.

When the sons and daughters of the most
High God come forth in the morning of the
resurrection, this principal of love will ex-
ist in their bosoms just as it exists here,
only intensified according to the increased
knowledge and understanding which they
possess; hence they will be capacitated to
enjoy the relationships of husband and
wife, of parents and children in a hundred
fold degree greater than they could in mortal-
ity. We are not capable, while surrounded
with the weaknesses of our flesh, to enjoy
these eternal principles in the same degree
that will then exist. Shall these principles of
conjugal and parental love and affection be
thwarted in the eternal worlds? Shall they
be rooted out and overcome? No, most de-
cidedly not. According to the religious no-
tions of the world these principles will not
exist after the resurrection; but our reli-
gion teaches the fallacy of such notions. It
is true that we read in the New Testament
that in the resurrection they neither marry
nor are given in marriage, but are as the
angels in heaven. These are the words of
our Savior when He was addressing him-

self to a very wicked class of people, the
Sadducees, a portion of the Jewish nation,
who rejected Jesus, and the counsel of God
against their own souls. They had not at-
tained to the blessings and privileges of
their fathers, but had apostatized; and Jesus
in speaking to them, says that in the res-
urrection they neither marry nor are given
in marriage but are as the angels of God.

I am talking, to-day, to Latter-day
Saints; I am not reasoning with unbe-
lievers. If I were, I should appeal more
fully to the Old Testament Scriptures to
bring in arguments and testimonies to
prove the divine authenticity of polygamic
marriages. Perhaps I may touch upon
this for a few moments, for the benefit of
strangers, should there be any in our
midst. Let me say, then, that God's people,
under every dispensation since the creation
of the world, have, generally, been polyga-
mists. I say this for the benefit of stran-
gers. According to the good old book,
called the Bible, when God saw proper to
call out Abraham from all the heathen na-
tions, and made him a great man in the
world, He saw proper, also, to make him a
polygamist, and approbated him in taking
unto himself more wives than one. Was it
wrong in Abraham to do this thing? If it
were, when did God reprove him for so do-
ing? When did He ever reproach Jacob
for doing the same thing? Who can find
the record in the lids of the Bible of God
reproving Abraham, as being a sinner, and
having committed a crime, in taking to
himself two living wives? No such thing
is recorded. He was just as much blessed
after doing this thing as before, and more
so, for God promised blessings upon the
issue of Abraham by his second wife the
same as that of the first wife, providing he
was equally faithful. This was a proviso
in every case.

When we come down to Jacob, the Lord
permitted him to take four wives. They
are so called in Holy Writ. They are not
denominated prostitutes, neither are they
called concubines, but they are called wives,
legal wives; and to show that God approved
of the course of Jacob in taking these wives,
He blessed them abundantly, and hearken-
ed to the prayer of the second wife just the
same as to the first. Rachel was the sec-
ond wife of Jacob, and our great mother;
for you know that many of the Latter-day
Saints by revelation know themselves to be
the descendants of Joseph, and he was the
son of Rachel, the second wife of Jacob. God
in a peculiar manner blessed the posterity
of this second wife. Instead of condemn-
ing the old patriarch, He ordained that
Joseph, the first-born of this second wife,
should be considered the first-born of all
the twelve tribes, and into his hands was
given the double birthright, according to

the laws of the ancients. And yet he was the offspring of plurality,—of the second wife of Jacob. Of course, if Reuben, who was indeed, the first-born unto Jacob, had conducted himself properly he might have retained the birthright and the greater inheritance; but he lost that through his transgression, and it was given to a polygamic child, who had the privilege of inheriting the blessing to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills; the great continent of North and South America was conferred upon him. Another proof that God did not disapprove of a man having more wives than one, is to be found in the fact that, Rachel, after she had been a long time barren, prayed to the Lord to give her seed. The Lord hearkened to her cry and granted her prayer; and when she received seed from the Lord by her polygamic husband, she exclaimed “the Lord hath hearkened unto me and hath answered my prayer.” Now do you think the Lord would have done this if he had considered polygamy a crime? Would he have hearkened to the prayer of this woman if Jacob had been living with her in adultery? and he certainly was doing so if the ideas of this generation are correct.

Again, what says the Lord in the days of Moses, under another dispensation? We have seen that in the days of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He approved of polygamy and blessed His servants who practised it, and also their wives and children. Now, let us come down to the days of Moses. We read that, on a certain occasion the sister of Moses, Miriam, and certain others in the great congregation of Israel, got very jealous. What were they jealous about? About the Ethiopian woman that Moses had taken to wife, in addition to the daughter of Jethro, whom he had taken before in the land of Midian. How dare the great law-giver, after having committed, according to the ideas of the present generation, a great crime, show his face on Mount Sinai when it was clothed with the glory of the God of Israel? But what did the Lord do in the case of Miriam, for finding fault with her brother Moses? Instead of saying “you are right, Miriam, he has committed a great crime, and no matter how much you speak against him,” He smote her with a leprosy the very moment she began to complain, and she was considered unclean for a certain number of days. Here the Lord manifested by the display of a signal judgment, that He disapproved of any one speaking against His servants for taking more wives than one, because it may not happen to suit their notion of things.

I make these remarks and wish to apply them to fault-finders against plural marriages in our day. Are there any Miriams in our congregation to-day, any of those

who, professing to belong to the Israel of the latter-days, sometimes find fault with the man of God standing at their head, because he not only believes in, but practices this divine institution of the ancients? If there be such in our midst, I say, remember Miriam the very next time you begin to talk with your neighboring women, or anybody else against this holy principle. Remember the awful curse and judgment that fell on the sister of Moses when she did the same thing, and then fear and tremble before God, lest He, in His wrath, may swear that you shall not enjoy the blessings ordained for those who inherit the highest degree of glory.

Let us pass along to another instance under the dispensation of Moses. The Lord says, on a certain occasion, if a man have married two wives, and he should happen to hate one and love the other, is he to be punished,—cast out and stoned to death as an adulterer? No; instead of the Lord denouncing him as an adulterer because of having two wives, He gave a commandment regulating the matter, so that this principle of hate in the mind of a man towards one of his wives should not control him in the important question of the division of his inheritance among his children, compelling him to give just as much to the son of the hated wife as to the son of the one beloved; and, if the son of the hated woman happened to be the first-born, he should actually inherit the double portion.

Consequently, the Lord approved, not only the two wives, but their posterity also. Now, if the women had not been considered wives by the Lord, their children would have been bastards, and you know that He has said that bastards shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord, until the tenth generation, hence you see there is a great distinction between those whom the Lord calls legitimate or legal, and those who were bastards,—begotten in adultery and whoredom. The latter, with their posterity, were shut out of the congregation of the Lord until the tenth generation, while the former were exalted to all the privileges of legitimate birthright.

Again, under that same law and dispensation, we find that the Lord provided for another contingency among the hosts of Israel. In order that the inheritances of the families of Israel might not run into the hands of strangers, the Lord, in the book of Deuteronomy, gives a command that if a man die, leaving a wife, but no issue, his brother shall marry his widow and take possession of the inheritance; and to prevent this inheritance going out of the family a strict command was given that the widow should marry the brother or nearest living kinsman of her deceased husband. The law was in full force at the time of th

introduction of Christianity,—a great many centuries after it was given. The reasoning of the Sadduces on one occasion when conversing with Jesus proves that the law was then observed. Said they, "There were seven brethren who all took a certain woman, each one taking her in succession after the death of the other," and they inquired of Jesus which of the seven would have her for a wife in the resurrection. The Sadducees, no doubt, used this figure to prove, as they thought, the fallacy of the doctrine of the resurrection, but it also proves that this law, given by the Creator while Israel walked acceptably before Him, was acknowledged by their wicked descendants in the days of the Savior. I merely quote the passage to show that the law was not considered obsolete at that time. A case like this, when six of the brethren had died, leaving the widow without issue, the seventh, whether married or unmarried, must fulfill this law and take the widow to wife, or lay himself liable to a very severe penalty. What was that penalty? According to the testimony of the law of Moses he would be cursed, for Moses says "cursed be he that doth not all things according as it is written in this book of the law, and let all the people say Amen." There can be no doubt that many men in those days were compelled to be polygamists in the fulfilment of this law, for any man who would not take the childless wife of a deceased brother and marry her, would come under the tremendous curse recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, and all the people would be obliged to sanction the curse, because he would not obey the law of God and become a polygamist. They were not all Congressmen in those days, nor Presidents, nor Presbyterians, nor Methodists, nor Roman Catholics; but they were the people of God, governed by divine law, and were commanded to be polygamists; not merely suffered to be so, but actually commanded to be.

There are some Latter-day Saints who, perhaps, have not searched these things as they ought, hence we occasionally find some who will say that God suffered these things to be. I will go further, and say that He commanded them, and He pronounced a curse, to which all the people had to say amen, if they did not fulfil the commandment.

Coming down to the days of the prophets we find that they were polygamists; also to the days of the kings of Israel, whom God appointed himself, and approbated and blessed. This was especially the case with one of them, named David, who, the Lord said, was a man after His own heart. David was called when yet a youth, to reign over the whole twelve tribes of Israel; but Saul, the reigning king of Israel, persecuted him,

and sought to take away his life. David fled from city to city throughout all the coasts of Judea in order to get beyond the reach of the relentless persecutions of Saul. While thus fleeing, the Lord was with him, hearing his prayers, answering his petitions, giving him line upon line, precept upon precept; permitting him to look into the Urim and Thummin and receive revelations, which enabled him to escape from his enemies.

In addition to all these blessings that God bestowed upon him in his youth, before he was exalted to the throne, the Lord gave him eight wives; and after exalting him to the throne, instead of denouncing him for having many wives, and pronouncing him worthy of fourteen or twenty-one years of imprisonment, the Lord was with His servant David, and, thinking he had not wives enough He gave to him all the wives of his master Saul, in addition to the eight he had previously given him. Was the Lord to be considered a criminal, and worthy of being tried in a court of justice and sent to prison for thus increasing the polygamic relations of David? No, certainly not; it was in accordance with His own righteous laws, and He was with His servant, David the King, and blessed him. By and by, when David transgressed, not in taking other wives, but in taking the wife of another man, the anger of the Lord was kindled against him and he chastened him and took away all the blessings He had given him. All the wives David had received from the hand of God were taken from him. Why? Because he had committed adultery. Here then is a great distinction between adultery and plurality of wives. One brings honor and blessing to those who engage in it, the other degradation and death.

After David had repented with all his heart of his crime with the wife of Uriah, he, notwithstanding the number of wives he had previously taken, took Bathsheba legally, and by that legal marriage Solomon was born; the child born of her unto David, begotten illegally, being a bastard, displeased the Lord and he struck it with death; but with Solomon, a legal issue from the same woman, the Lord was so pleased that He ordained Solomon and set him on the throne of his father David. This shows the difference between the two classes of posterity, the one begotten illegally, the other in the order of marriage. If Solomon had been a bastard, as this pious generation would have us suppose, instead of being blessed of the Lord and raised to the throne of his father, he would have been banished from the congregation of Israel and his seed after him for ten generations. But, notwithstanding that he was so highly blessed and honored of the Lord, there was room for him to transgress and fall, and in

the end he did so. For a long time the Lord blessed Solomon, but eventually he violated that law which the Lord had given forbidding Israel to take wives from the idolatrous nations, and some of these wives succeeded in turning his heart from the Lord and induced him to worship the heathen gods, and the Lord was angry with him and, as it is recorded in the Book of Mormon, considered the acts of Solomon an abomination in His sight.

Let us now come to the record in the Book of Mormon, when the Lord led forth Lehi and Nephi, and Ishmael and his two sons and five daughters out of the land of Jerusalem to the land of America, the males and females were about equal in number. There were Nephi, Sam, Laman and Lemuel, the four sons of Lehi, and Zoram, brought out of Jerusalem. How many daughters of Ishmael were unmarried? Just five. Would it have been just under these circumstances, to ordain plurality among them? No. Why? Because the males and females were equal in number and they were all under the guidance of the Almighty, hence it would have been unjust, and the Lord gave a revelation,—the only one on record I believe—in which a command was ever given to any branch of Israel to be confined to the monogamic system. In this case the Lord through His servant Lehi, gave a command that they should have but one wife. The Lord had a perfect right to vary His commands in this respect according to circumstances as He did in others, as recorded in the Bible. There we find that the domestic relations were governed according to the mind and will of God, and were varied according to circumstances, as he thought proper.

By and by, after the death of Lehi, some of his posterity began to disregard the strict law that God had given to their father, and took more wives than one, and the Lord put them in mind, through His servant Jacob, one of the sons of Lehi, of this law, and told them that they were transgressing it, and then referred to David and Solomon, as having committed abomination in His sight. The Bible also tells us that they sinned in the sight of God; not in taking wives legally but only in those they took illegally, in doing which they brought wrath and condemnation upon their heads.

But because the Lord dealt thus with the small branch of the House of Israel that came to America, under their peculiar circumstances, there are those at the present day who will appeal to this passage in the Book of Mormon as something universally applicable in regard to man's domestic relations. The same God that commanded one branch of the House of Israel in America, to take but one wife when the numbers of

the two sexes were about equal, gave a different command to the hosts of Israel in Palestine. But let us see the qualifying clause given in the Book of Mormon on this subject. After having reminded the people of the commandment delivered by Lehi in regard to monogamy, the Lord says, "for if I will raise up seed unto me I will command my people, otherwise they shall hearken unto these things;" that is, if I will raise up seed among my people of the House of Israel, according to the law that exists among the tribes of Israel I will give them a commandment on the subject, but if I do not give this commandment they shall hearken to the law which I give unto their father Lehi. That is the meaning of the passage, and this very passage goes to prove that plurality was a principle God did approve under circumstances when it was authorized by Him.

In the early rise of this Church, February, 1831, God gave a commandment to its members, recorded in the Book of Covenantants, wherein he says "thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and to none else;" and then He gives a strict law against adultery. This you have, no doubt, all read; but let me ask whether the Lord had the privilege and the right to vary from this law. It was given in 1831, when the one-wife system alone prevailed among this people. I will tell you what the Prophet Joseph said in relation to this matter in 1831, also in 1832, the year in which the law commanding the members of this Church to cleave to one wife only was given. Joseph was then living in Portage county, in the town of Hiram, at the house of Father John Johnson. Joseph was very intimate with that family, and they were good people at that time, and enjoyed much of the spirit of the Lord. In the fore part of the year 1832, Joseph told individuals, then in the Church, that he had inquired of the Lord concerning the principle of plurality of wives, and he received for answer that the principle of taking more wives than one is a true principle, but the time had not yet come for it to be practiced. That was before the Church was two years old. The Lord has His own time to do all things pertaining to His purposes in the last dispensation. His own time for restoring all things that have been predicted by the ancient prophets. If they have predicted that the day would come when seven women would take hold of one man, saying "we will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach;" and that, in that day the branch of the Lord should be beautiful and glorious and the fruits of the earth should be excellent, and comely, the Lord has the right to say when that time shall be.

Now supposing the members of this Church had undertaken to vary from that law given in 1831, to love their one wife with all their hearts and to cleave to none other, they would have come under the curse and condemnation of God's holy law. Some twelve years after that time the revelation on Celestial Marriage was revealed. This is just republished at the DESERT News office, in a pamphlet entitled "Answers to Questions," by President George A. Smith, and heretofore has been published in pamphlet form and in the *Millennial Star*, and sent throughout the length and breadth of our country, being included in our works and published in the works of our enemies. Then came the Lord's time for this holy and ennobling principle to be practiced again among His people.

We have not time to read the revelation this afternoon; suffice it to say that God revealed the principle through His servant Joseph in 1843. It was known by many individuals while the Church was yet in Illinois; and though it was not then printed, it was a familiar thing through all the streets of Nauvoo, and indeed throughout all Hancock county. Did I hear about it? I verily did. Did my brethren of the Twelve know about it? They certainly did. Were there any females who knew about it? There certainly were, for some received the revelation and entered into the practice of the principle. Some may say "Why was it not printed, and made known to the people generally, if it was of such importance?" I reply by asking another question. Why did not the revelations in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants come to us in print years before they did? Why were they shut up in Joseph's cupboard years and years without being suffered to be printed and sent broadcast throughout the land? Because the Lord had His own time again to accomplish His purposes, and He suffered the revelations to be printed just when He saw proper. He did not suffer the revelation on the great American war to be published until sometime after it was given. So in regard to the revelation on plurality, it was only a short time after Joseph's death that we published it, having a copy thereof. But what became of the original? An apostate destroyed it; you have heard her name. That same woman, in destroying the original, thought she had destroyed the revelation from the face of the earth. She was embittered against Joseph, her husband, and at times fought against him with all her heart; and then again she would break down in her feelings, and humble herself before God and call upon His holy name, and would then lead forth ladies and place their hands in the hands of Joseph, and they were married to him according to the

law of God. That same woman has brought up her children to believe that no such thing as plurality of wives existed in the days of Joseph, and has instilled the bitterest principles of apostasy into their minds, to fight against the Church that has come to these mountains according to the predictions of Joseph.

In the year 1844, before his death, a large company was organized to come and search out a location, west of the Rocky Mountains. We have been fulfilling and carrying out his predictions in coming here and since our arrival. The course pursued by this woman shows what apostates can do, and how wicked they can become in their hearts. When they apostatize from the truth they can come out and swear before God and the heavens that such and such things never existed, when they know, as well as they know they exist themselves, that they are swearing falsely. Why do they do this? Because they have no fear of God before their eyes; because they have apostatized from the truth; because they have taken it upon themselves to destroy the revelations of the Most High, and to banish them from the face of the earth, and the Spirit of God withdraws from them. We have come here to these mountains, and have continued to practice the principle of celestial marriage from the day the revelation was given until the present time; and we are a polygamic people, and a great people, comparatively speaking, considering the difficult circumstances under which we came to this land.

Let us speak for a few moments upon another point connected with this subject—that is, the reason why God has established polygamy under the present circumstances among this people. If all the inhabitants of the earth, at the present time, were righteous before God, and both males and females were faithful in keeping His commandments, and the numbers of the sexes of a marriageable age were exactly equal, there would be no necessity for any such institution. Every righteous man could have his wife and there would be no surplus of females. But what are the facts in relation to this matter? Since old pagan Rome and Greece,—worshippers of idols,—passed a law confining a man to one wife, there has been a great surplus of females, who have had no possible chance of getting married. You may think this a strange statement, but it is a fact that those nations were the founders of what is termed monogamy. All other nations, with few exceptions, had followed the scriptural plan of having more wives than one. These nations, however, were very powerful, and when Christianity came to them, especially the Roman nation, it had to bow to their mandates and customs, hence the Christians

gradually adopted the monogamic system. The consequence was that a great many marriageable ladies of those days, and of all generations from that time to the present have not had the privilege of husbands, as the one-wife system has been established by law among the nations descended from the great Roman Empire,—namely, the nations of modern Europe and the American States. This law of monogamy, or the monogamic system, laid the foundation for prostitution and the evils and diseases of the most revolting nature and character under which modern Christendom groans, for as God has implanted, for a wise purpose, certain feelings in the breasts of females as well as males, the gratification of which is necessary to health and happiness, and which can only be accomplished legitimately in the married state, myriads of those who have been deprived of the privilege of entering that state, rather than be deprived of the gratification of those feelings altogether, have, in despair, given way to wickedness and licentiousness; hence the whoredoms and prostitution among the nations of the earth where the “Mother of Harlots” has her seat.

When the religious Reformers came out, some two or three centuries ago, they neglected to reform the marriage system,—a subject demanding their urgent attention. But leaving these Reformers and their doings, let us come down to our own times and see whether, as has been often said by many, the numbers of the sexes are equal; and let us take as a basis for our investigations on this part of our subject, the censuses taken by several of the States in the American Union.

Many will tell us that the number of males and the number of females born are just about equal, and because they are so it is not reasonable to suppose that God ever intended the nations to practice plurality of wives. Let me say a few words on that. Supposing we should admit, for the sake of argument, that the sexes are born in equal numbers, does that prove that the same equality exists when they come to a marriageable age? By no means. There may be about equal numbers born, but what do the statistics of our country show in regard to the deaths? Do as many females as males die during the first year of their existence? If you go to the published statistics you will find, almost without exception, that in every State a greater number of males die the first year of their existence than females. The same holds good from one year to five years, from five years to ten, from ten to fifteen, and from fifteen to twenty. This shows that the number of females is greatly in excess of the males when they come to a marriageable age. Let us elucidate still further, in proof of the

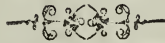
position here assumed. Let us take, for instance, the census of the State of Pennsylvania in the year 1860, and we shall find that there were 17588, more females than males between the age of twenty and thirty years, which may strictly be termed a marriageable age. Says one, “Probably the great war made that difference.” No, this was before the war. Now let us go to the statistics of the State of New York, before the war, and we find according to the official tables of the census taken in 1860, that there were 45,104 more females than males in that one State, between the ages of 20 and thirty years,—a marriageable age recollect! Now let us go to the State of Massachusetts, and look at the statistics there. In the year 1865, there were 33,452 more females than males between the age of twenty and thirty. We might go on from State to State and then to the census taken by the United States, and a vast surplus would be shown of females over males of a marriageable age. What is to be done with them? I will tell you what Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and New York say: they say, virtually, “we will pass a law so strict, that if these females undertake to marry a man who has another wife, both they and the men they marry shall be subject to a term of imprisonment in the penitentiary.” Indeed! Then what are you going to do with these hundreds of thousands of females of a marriageable age? “We are going to make them either old maids or prostitutes, and we would a little rather have them prostitutes, then we men would have no need to marry.” That is the conclusion many of these marriageable ma'es, between twenty and thirty years of age have come to. They will not marry because the laws of the land have a tendency to make prostitutes, and they can purchase all the animal gratification they desire without being bound to any woman; hence many of them have mistresses, by whom they raise children, and, when they get tired of them, turn both mother and children into the street, with nothing to support them, the law allowing them to do so, because the women are not wives. Thus the poor creatures are plunged into the depths of misery wretchedness, and degradation, because at all risks they have followed the instincts implanted within them by their Creator, and not having the opportunity to do so legally have done so unlawfully. There are hundreds and thousands of females in this boasted land of liberty, through the narrow, contracted, bigoted State laws, preventing them from ever getting husbands. That is what the Lord is fighting against; we, also, are fighting against it, and for the re-establishment of the Bible religion and the celestial or Patriarchal order of marriage.

It is no matter according to the Constitution whether we believe in the patriarchal part of the Bible, in the Mosiac or in the Christian part; whether we believe in one-half, two-thirds, or in the whole of it; that is nobody's business. The Constitution never granted power to Congress to prescribe what part of the Bible any people should believe in or reject; it never intended any such thing.

Much more might be said, but the congregation is large, and a speaker, of course, will weary. Though my voice is tolerably good, I feel weary in attempting to make a congregation of from eight to ten thousand people hear me. I have tried to do so. May God bless you, and may he pour out His

Spirit upon the rising generation among us, and upon the missionaries who are about to be sent to the United States, and elsewhere, that the great principles, political, religious and domestic, that God has ordained and established, may be made known to all people.

In this land of liberty in religious worship, let us boldly proclaim our rights, to believe in and practice any Bible precept, command or doctrine, whether in the Old or New Testament, whether relating to ceremonies, ordinances, domestic relations, or anything else, not incompatible with the rights of others, and the great revelations of Almighty God manifested in ancient and modern times. Amen.



REMARKS

BY

PRESIDENT GEO. A. SMITH,

DELIVERED

In the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Oct. 8, 1869.

It is a difficult undertaking to address this immense audience. If a man commences speaking loud, in a short time his voice gives out; whereas, if he commence rather low, he may raise his voice by degrees, and be able to sustain himself in speaking some length of time. But with children crying, a few persons whispering, and some shuffling their feet, it is indeed a difficult task to make an audience of ten thousand persons hear. I have listened with pleasure to the instructions of our brethren from the commencement of our Conference to the present time. I have rejoiced in their testimonies. I have felt that the Elders are improving in wisdom, in knowledge, in power and in understanding; and I rejoice in the privilege, which we have at the present day, of sending out to our own country, a few hundred of the Elders who have had experience,—who have lived in Israel long enough to know, to feel and to realize the importance of the work in which they are engaged,—to understand its principles and comprehend the way of life. They can bear testimony to a generation that has nearly grown from childhood since the death of the Prophet, Joseph Smith.

The Lord said in relation to those who have driven the Saints that He would visit “judgment, wrath and indignation, wailing and anguish, and gnashing of teeth upon their heads unto the third and fourth generation, so long as they repent not and hate me, saith the Lord your God.”

I am a native of Potsdam, St. Lawrence County, New York,—a town somewhat famous for its literary institutions, its learning and the religion and morality

of its inhabitants. I left there in my youth, with my father's family, because we had received the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as revealed through Joseph Smith; and followed with the Saints through their drivings and trials unto the present day.

I have never seen the occasion, nor let the opportunity slip, from the time when I first came to a knowledge of the truth of the work of the Lord in the last days, that I understood it was in my power to do good for the advancement of this work, but what I have used my utmost endeavors to accomplish that good. I have never failed to bear a faithful testimony to the work of God, or to carry out to all intents and purposes, the wishes and designs of the Prophet, Joseph Smith. I was his kinsman; was familiar with him, though several years his junior; knew his views, his sentiments, his ways, his designs, and many of the thoughts of his heart, and I do *know* that the servants of God, the Twelve Apostles, upon whom he laid the authority to bear off the Kingdom of God, and fulfil the work which he had commenced,—have done according to his designs, in every particular, up to the present time, and are continuing to do so. And I know, furthermore, that he rejoiced in the fact that the law of redemption and Celestial marriage was revealed unto the church in such a manner that it would be out of the power of earth and hell to destroy it; and that he rejoiced in the fact that the servants of God were ready prepared, having the keys to bear off the work he had commenced. Previous to my leaving Potsdam, there was but one man that I ever heard of in

that town who did not believe the Bible. He proclaimed himself an atheist and he drowned himself.

The Latter-day Saints believe the Bible. An agent of the American Bible Society called on me the other day and wanted to know if we would aid the Society in circulating the Bible in our Territory? I replied yes, by all means, for it was the book from which we were enabled to set forth our doctrines, and especially the doctrine of plural marriage.

There is an opinion in the breasts of many persons,—who suppose that they believe the Bible,—that Christ, when He came, did away with plural marriage, and that He inaugurated what is termed monogamy; and there are certain arguments and quotations used to maintain this view of the subject, one of which is found in Paul's first epistle to Timothy (3 chap. 2 vs.), where Paul says: "A Bishops should be blameless, the husband of one wife." The friends of monogamy render it in this way: "A bishop should be blameless, the husband of *but one* wife." That would imply that any one but a bishop might have more. But they will say, "we mean—A bishop should be blameless, the husband of one wife only." Well, that would also admit of the construction that other people might have more than one. I understand it to mean that a bishop must be a married man.

A short time ago, the Minister from the King of Greece to the United States called on President Young. I inquired of him in relation to the religion of his country, and asked him if the clergy were allowed to marry. It is generally understood that the Roman Catholic clergy are not allowed to marry. How is it with the Greek clergy? "Well," said he, "all the clergy marry except the bishop." I replied, "you render the saying of Paul differently from what we do. We interpret it to mean—a bishop should be blameless, the husband of one wife *at least*;" and "we construe it" said he "directly the opposite."

Now this passage does not prove that a man should have but one wife. It only proves that a bishop should be a married man. The same remark is made of deacons, that they also should have wives. Another passage is brought up where the Savior speaks of divorce. He tells us that it is very wrong to divorce,

and that Moses permitted it because of the hardness of their (the children of Israel) hearts. A man should leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife, and they twain should be one flesh. That is the principal argument raised that a man should have but one wife.

In the New Testament in various places, certain eminent men are referred to as patterns of faith, purity, righteousness and piety. For instance if you read the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, the 11th chap., you find therein selected those persons "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turning to flight the armies of the aliens;" and it is said by faith Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph, and that he conferred upon them a blessing to the uttermost bounds of the everlasting hills." Who was Joseph? Why, Joseph was the son of Rachel. And who was Rachel? Rachel was the second wife of Jacob, a polygamist. Jacob had four wives; and after he had taken the second, (Rachel) she, being barren, gave a third wife unto her husband that she might bear children unto him for her; and instead of being displeased with her for giving her husband another wife, God heard her prayer, blessed her, worked a miracle in her favor, by opening her womb and she bear a son, and called his name Joseph, rejoicing in God, whom she testified would give her another son. The question now arises—were not Rachel and Jacob one flesh? Yes. Leah and Jacob were also one flesh. Jacob is selected by the Apostle Paul as a pattern of faith for Christians to follow; he blessed his twelve sons, whom he had by four wives. The law of God, as it existed in those days, and as laid down in this book (the Bible) makes a child born of adultery or of fornication a bastard; and the same is prohibited from entering into the congregation of the Lord unto the tenth generation.

Now, instead of God's blessing Rachel and Jacob and their offspring, as we are told He did, we might have expected something entirely different, had it not been that God was pleased with and approved and sustained a plurality of wives.

While we are considering this subject, we will inquire, did the Savior in any place that we can read of, in the course of His mission on the earth, denounce a plurality of wives? He lived in a nation of Jews; the law of Moses was in force, plurality of wives was the custom, and thousands upon thousands of people, from the highest to the lowest in the land, were polygamists. The Savior denounced adultery; He denounced fornication; He denounced lust; also, divorce; but is there a single sentence asserting that plurality of wives is wrong? If so, where is it? Who can find it? Why did he not say it was wrong? "Think not," said He, "that I am come to destroy the law or the Prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. Not one jot or one tittle shall pass from the law and the Prophets; but all shall be fulfilled." Of what does the Savior speak when He refers to "the law"? Why, of the Ten Commandments, and other rules of life commanded by God and adopted by the ancients, and which Bro. Pratt referred to yesterday, showing you from the sacred book that God legislated and made laws for the protection of a plurality of wives, (Exod. 21.10) and that He *commanded* men to take a plurality under some circumstances. Brother Pratt further showed that the Lord made arrangements to protect to all intents and purposes, the interests of the first wife; and to shield and protect the children of a wife from disinheritance who might be unfortunate enough not to have the affections of her husband. (Deut., 21.15.) These things were plainly written in the law,—that law of which the Savior says "not one jot or one tittle shall pass away." Continuing our inquiry, we pass on to the epistles of John the Evangelist, which we find in the book of Revelations, written to the seven churches of Asia. In them we find the Evangelist denounces adultery, fornication and all manner of iniquities and abominations of which these churches were guilty. Anything against a plurality of wives? No; not a syllable. Yet those churches were in a country in which plurality was the custom. Hundreds of Saints had more wives than one; and if it had been wrong, what would have been the result? Why, John would have denounced the practice, the same as the children of Israel were denounced for marrying heathen wives, had it not been

that the law of plurality was the commandment of God.

Again, on this point, we can refer to the Prophets of the Old Testament,—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and others. When God called those men He warned them that if they did not deliver the message to the people which He gave them concerning their sins and iniquities that His vengeance should rest upon their heads. These are His words to Ezekiel, "Son of man I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel, therefore hear the word at my mouth and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity but his blood will I require at thine hand; yet if thou warn the wicked and he turn not from his wickedness nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity but thou hast delivered thy soul." (Ezek. 3.17, 18, 19.) How do we find these Prophets of the Lord fulfilling the commandments of the Almighty? We find them pouring out denunciations upon the heads of the people,—against adultery, fornication and every species of wickedness. All this, too, in a country in which, from the King down to the lowest orders of the people, a plurality of wives was practiced. Do they say anything against plurality of wives? Not one word. It was only in cases where men and women took improper *licence* with each other, in violation of the holy law of marriage, that they were guilty of sin.

If plurality of wives had been a violation of the seventh commandment those prophets would have denounced it, otherwise their silence on the matter would have been dangerous to themselves, inasmuch as the blood of the people would have been required at their hands. The opposers of Celestial Marriage sometimes quote a passage in the seventh chapter of Romans, second and third verses, to show that a plurality of wives is wrong; but when we come to read the passage it shows that a plurality of *husbands* is wrong. You can read the passage for yourselves. In the forcible parable used by the Savior in relation to the rich man and Lazarus, we find recorded that the poor man Lazarus was carried to Abraham's bosom—Abra-

ham the father of the faithful. The rich man calls unto father Abraham to send Lazarus, who is afar off. Who was Abraham? He was a man who had a plurality of wives. And yet all good Christians, even pious church deacons, expect when they die to go to Abraham's bosom. I am sorry to say, however, that thousands of them will be disappointed, from the fact that they cannot and will not go where any one has a plurality of wives; and I am convinced that Abraham will not turn out his own wives to receive such unbelievers in God's law. One peculiarity of this parable is the answer of Abraham to the application of the rich man, to send Lazarus to his five brothers "lest they come into this place of torment," which was—"they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them; and if they hear not Moses and the prophets neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Moses' law provided for a plurality of wives and the prophets observed that law, and Isaiah predicts its observance even down to the latter days. Isaiah, in his 4th chap. and 1st and 2nd verses, says "seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, we will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach. In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent."

A reference to the scriptures shows that the reproach of woman is to be childless, Gen. c. 30 v. 23; Luke c. 1, v. 25.

We will now refer to John the Baptist. He came as a fore-runner of Christ. He was a lineal descendant of the house of Levi. His father was a priest. John the Baptist was a child born by miracle, God having revealed to his father that Elizabeth who had been many years barren should bear a son. John feared not the world, but went forth preaching in the wilderness of Judea, declaiming against wickedness and corruption in the boldest terms. He preached against extortion; against the cruelty exercised by soldiers and tax gatherers. He even was so bold as to rebuke the king on his throne, to his face, for adultery. Did he say anything against a plurality of wives? No; it cannot be found. Yet thousands were believers in and practiced this order of marriage, under the law of Moses that God had revealed

In bringing this subject before you, we cannot help saying that God knew what was best for His people. Hence He commanded them as He would have them act. The law regulating marriage previous to Moses, recognized a plurality of wives. Abraham and Jacob and others had a plurality. These are the men who are referred to in scripture as patterns of piety and purity. David had many wives. The scripture says that David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, save in the matter of Uriah the Hittite, 1 Kings 15 cap. 5 vs. "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart which shall fulfill all my will. Of this man's seed hath God, according to His promise raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus." Acts 13 cap. 22 and 23 vs. Did David sin in taking so many wives? No. In what, then, did his sin consist? It was because he took the wife of Uriah, the Hittite,—that is, violated the law of God in taking her. The Lord had given him the wives of Saul and would have given him many more; but he had no right to take one who belonged to another. When he did so the curse of adultery fell upon his head, and his wives were taken from him and given to another. We will now inquire in relation to the Savior himself. From whom did he descend? From the house of David a polygamist; and if you will trace the names of the families through which he descended you will find that numbers of them had a plurality of wives. How appropriate it would have been for Jesus, descending as he did from a race of polygamists, to have denounced this institution of plural marriage and shown its sinfulness, had it been a sin! Can we suppose, for one moment, if Patriarchal marriage were wrong, that He would, under the circumstances, have been silent concerning it or failed to denounce it in the most positive manner? Then if plural marriage be adultery and the offspring spurious, Christ Jesus is not the Christ; and we must look for another.

All good Christians are flattering themselves with the hope that they will finally enter the gates of the New Jerusalem. I presume this is the hope of all denominations,—Catholics, Protestants, Greeks and all who believe the Bible.

Suppose they go there, what will they find? They will find at the twelve gates twelve angels, and "names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel." The names of the twelve sons of Jacob, the polygamist. Can a monogamist enter there? "And the walls of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb;" and at the gates the names of the twelve tribes of Israel,—from the twelve sons of the four wives of Jacob. Those who denounce Patriarchal marriage will have to stay without and never walk the golden streets. And any man or woman that lifts his or her voice to proclaim against a plurality of wives under the Government of God, will have

to seek an inheritance outside of that city. For "there shall in no wise enter into it, anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, for without are sorcerers, whoremongers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Is not the man that denounces Celestial Marriage a liar? Does he not work abomination? "I Jesus have sent mine Angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and offspring of [the polygamist] David, the bright and the morning star."

May God enable us to keep His law, for "blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gate into the city." Amen.



DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BY

ELDER GEORGE Q. CANNON,

OCTOBER 9TH, 1869,

In the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City.

I will repeat a few verses in the tenth chapter of Mark, commencing at the twenty-eighth verse.

Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

And Jesus answered and said, verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

But he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

In rising to address you this morning, my brethren and sisters, I rely upon your faith and prayers and the blessing of God. We have heard, during Conference, a great many precious instructions, and in none have I been more interested than in those which have been given to the Saints concerning that much mooted doctrine called Patriarchal or Celestial Marriage. I am interested in this doctrine, because I see salvation, temporal and spiritual, embodied therein. I know, pretty well, what the popular feelings concerning this doctrine are; I am familiar with the opinions of the world, having traveled and mingled with the people sufficiently to be conversant with their ideas in relation to this subject. I am also familiar with the feelings of the Latter-day Saints upon this point. I know the sacrifice of feeling which it has caused for them to adopt this principle in their faith and lives. It has required the revelation of God, our Heavenly Father, to enable His people to receive this principle and carry it out. I wish, here, to make one remark in connection with this subject—that while there is abundant proof to be found in the scriptures and elsewhere in support of this doctrine, still it is not because it was practiced four thousand years ago by the servants and people of

God, or because it has been practiced by any people or nation in any period of the world's history, that the Latter-day saints have adopted it and made it part of their practice, but it is because God, our Heavenly Father, has revealed it unto us. If there were no record of its practice to be found, and if the Bible, Book of Mormon and Book of Doctrine and Covenants were totally silent in respect to this doctrine, it would nevertheless be binding upon us as a people, God Himself having given a revelation for us to practice it at the present time. This should be understood by us as a people. It is gratifying to know, however, that we are not the first of God's people unto whom this principle has been revealed; it is gratifying to know that we are only following in the footsteps of those who have preceded us in the work of God, and that we, to-day, are only carrying out the principle which God's people observed, in obedience to revelation from Him, thousands of years ago. It is gratifying to know that we are suffering persecution, that we are threatened with fines and imprisonment for the practice of precisely the same principle which Abraham, the "Friend of God," practiced in his life and taught to his children after him.

The discourses of Brother Orson Pratt and of President George A. Smith have left but very little to be said in relation to the scriptural arguments in favor of this doctrine. I know that the general opinion among men is that the Old Testament, to some extent, sustains it; but that the New Testament,—Jesus and the Apostles, were silent concerning it. It was clearly proved in our hearing yesterday, and the afternoon of the day previous, that the New Testament, though not so explicit in reference

to the doctrine, is still decidedly in favor of it and sustains it. Jesus very plainly told the Jews, when boasting of being the seed of Abraham, that if they were, they would do the works of Abraham. He and the Apostles, in various places, clearly set forth that Abraham was the great exemplar of faith for them to follow, and that they must follow him, if they ever expected to participate in the glory and exaltation enjoyed by Abraham and his faithful seed. Throughout the New Testament Abraham is held up to the converts to the doctrines which Jesus taught, as an example worthy of imitation, and in no place is there a word of condemnation uttered concerning him. The Apostle Paul, in speaking of him, says:

"Know ye, therefore, that they which are of the faith, the same are the children of Abraham. * * * So then they which be of the faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

He also says that the gentiles, through adoption, became Abraham's seed; that the blessing of Abraham, says he, might come upon the gentiles through Jesus Christ, shewing plainly that Jesus and all the Apostles who alluded to the subject, held the deeds of Abraham to be, in every respect, worthy of imitation.

Who was this Abraham? I have heard the saying frequently advanced, that in early life, being an idolater, it was an idolatrous, heathenish principle which he adopted in taking to himself a second wife, while Sarah still lived. Those who make this assertion in reference to the great patriarch, seem to be ignorant of the fact that he was well advanced in life and had served God faithfully many years, prior to making any addition to his family. He did not have a plurality of wives until years after the Lord had revealed Himself to him, commanding him to leave Ur, of the Chaldees, and go forth to a land which He would give to him and his posterity for an everlasting possession. He went forth and lived in that land many long years before the promise of God was fulfilled unto him,—namely, that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed; and Abraham was still without any heir, except Eliezer, of Damascus, the steward of his house. At length, after living thus for ten years, God commanded him to take to himself another wife, who was given to him by

his wife Sarah. When the offspring of this marriage was born, he was eighty-six years old.

We read of no word of condemnation from the Lord for this act,—something which we might naturally expect if, as this unbelieving and licentious generation affirm, the act of taking more wives than one be such a vile crime, and so abominable in the sight of God; for if it be evil in the sight of the Lord to-day, it was then, for the scriptures inform us that He changes not, He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and is without variableness or the shadow of turning. But instead of condemnation, God revealed himself continually to His friend Abraham, teaching His will unto him, revealing all things concerning the future it was necessary for him to understand, and promising him that, though he had been blessed with a son, Ishmael, yet in Isaac, a child of promise, not yet born, should his seed be called. Abraham was to have yet another son. Sarah, in her old age, because of her faithfulness, because of her willingness to comply with the requirements and revelations of God, was to have a son given unto her. Such an event was so unheard of among women at her time of life that, though the Lord promised it, she could not help laughing at the idea. But God fulfilled His promise, and in due time, Isaac was born, and was greatly blessed of the Lord.

Determined to try His faithful servant Abraham to the uttermost, the Lord, some years after the birth of this son, in whom He had promised that Abraham's seed should be called, required him to offer up this boy as a burnt offering to Him; and Abraham, nothing doubting, but full of faith and integrity, and of devotion to his God, proved himself worthy of the honored title that had been conferred upon him, namely, "the Friend of God," by taking his son Isaac, in whom most of his hopes for the future centred, up the mountain, and there, having built the altar, he bound the victim and with knife uplifted, was about to strike the fatal blow, when the angel of the Lord cried out of heaven commanding him not to slay his son. The Lord was satisfied, having tried him to the uttermost, and found him willing even to shed the blood of his well-beloved son.

The Lord was so pleased with the faithfulness of Abraham, that He gave

unto him the greatest promise He could give to any human being on the face of the earth. What do you think was the nature of that promise? Did He promise to Abraham a crown of eternal glory? Did He promise to him that he should be in the presence of the Lamb, that he should tune his harp and sing praises to God and the Lamb, throughout the endless ages of eternity? Let me quote it to you, and it would be well if all the inhabitants of the earth would reflect upon it. Said the Lord:

"In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies."

This was the promise which God gave to Abraham, in that hour of his triumph, in that hour when there was joy in heaven over the faithfulness of one of God's noblest and most devoted sons. Think of the greatness of this blessing! Can you count the stars of heaven, or even the grains of a handful of sand? No, it is beyond the power of earth's most gifted sons to do either, and yet God promised to Abraham that his seed should be as innumerable as the stars of heaven or as the sand on the sea-shore.

How similar was this promise of God to Abraham to that made by Jesus as a reward for faithfulness to those who followed Him! Said Jesus, he that forsakes brothers or sisters, houses or lands, father or mother, wives or children, shall receive a hundred fold in this life with persecution, and eternal life in the world to come.

A very similar blessing to that which God, long before, had made to Abraham, and couched in very similar terms.

It is pertinent for us to inquire, on the present occasion, how the promises made by Jesus and His Father, in ages of the world separated by a long interval the one from the other, could be realized under the system which prevails throughout Christendom at the present day? In the monogamic system, under which the possession of more than one living wife is regarded as such a crime, and as being so fearfully immoral, how could the promise of the Savior to his faithful followers, that they should have a hundredfold of wives and children, in this present life, ever be realized? There is a way which God has provided in a re-

velation given to this Church, in which He says:

"Strait is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto the exaltation and continuation of the lives, and few there be that find it, because ye receive me not in the world, neither do ye know me."

God revealed that strait and narrow way to Abraham, and taught him how he could enter therein. He taught him the principle of plurality of wives; Abraham practiced it and bequeathed it to his children as a principle which they were to practice. Under such a system it was a comparatively easy matter for men to have a hundred fold of wives, children, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters and everything else in proportion; and in no other way could the promises of Jesus be realized by His followers, than in the way God has provided, and which He has revealed to His Church and people in these latter-days.

I have felt led to dwell upon these few passages, from the sayings of Jesus, to show you that there are abundance of scriptural proofs in favor of this principle and the position this Church has assumed, in addition to those previously referred to.

It is a blessed thing to know that, in this as every other doctrine and principle taught by us as a Church, we are sustained by the revelations God gave to His people anciently. One of the strongest supports the Elders of this Church have had, in their labors among the nations, was the knowledge that the Bible and New Testament sustained every principle they advanced to the people. When they preached faith, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, the gathering of the people from the nations, the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the second coming of Christ, and every other principle ever touched upon by them, it was gratifying to know that they were sustained by the scriptures, and that they could turn to chapter and verse among the sayings of Jesus and His Apostles, or among those of the ancient prophets, in confirmation of every doctrine they ever attempted to bring to the attention of those to whom they ministered. There is nothing with which the Latter-day Saints can, with more confidence, refer to the scriptures for confirmation and support, than the

doctrine of plural marriage, which at the present time, among one of the most wicked, adulterous and corrupt generations the world has ever seen, is so much hated, and for which mankind generally, are so anxious to cast out and persecute the Latter-day Saints.

If we look abroad and peruse the records of every day life throughout the whole of Christendom, we find that crimes of every hue, and of the most appalling and revolting character are constantly committed, exciting neither surprise nor comment. Murder, robbery, adultery, seduction and every species of villainy known in the voluminous catalogue of crime, in modern times, are regarded as mere matters of ordinary occurrence, and yet there is a hue and cry raised, almost as wide as Christendom, for the persecution, by fine, imprisonment, proscription, outlawry or extermination of the people of Utah because, knowing that God, the Eternal Father, has spoken in these days and revealed His mind and will to them, they dare to carry out His behests. For years they have meekly submitted to this persecution and contumely, but they appeal now, as ever, to all rational, reflecting men, and invite comparison between the state of society here and in any portion of this or any other country, knowing that the verdict will be unanimous and overwhelming in their favor. In every civilized country on the face of the earth the seducer plies his arts to envelop his victim within his meshes, in order to accomplish her ruin most completely; and it is well known that men holding positions of trust and responsibility, looked upon as honorable and highly respectable members of society, violate their marriage vows by carrying on their secret amours and supporting mistresses, yet against the people of Utah, where such things are totally unknown, there is an eternal and rabid outcry because they practice the heaven-revealed system of a plurality of wives. It is a most astonishing thing, and no greater evidence could be given that Satan reigns in the hearts of the children of men, and that he is determined, if possible, to destroy the work of God from the face of the earth.

The Bible, the only work accepted by the nations of Christendom, as a divine revelation, sustains this doctrine, from beginning to end. The only revelation

on record that can be quoted against it, came through the Prophet Joseph Smith, and is contained in the Book of Mormon; and strange to say, here in Salt Lake City, a day or two since, one of the leading men of the nation, in his eager desire and determination to cast discredit on this doctrine, unable to do so by reference to the Bible, which he no doubt, in common with all Christians, acknowledges as divine, was compelled to have recourse to the Book of Mormon, a work which on any other point, he would most unquestionably have scouted and ridiculed as an emanation from the brain of an imposter. What consistency! A strange revolution this, that men should have recourse to our own works, whose authenticity they most emphatically deny, to prove us in the wrong. Yet, this attempt, whenever made, cannot be sustained, for Brother Pratt clearly showed to you, in his remarks the other day, that instead of the Book of Mormon being opposed to this principle, it contains an express provision for the revelation of the principle to us as a people at some future time, — namely that when the Lord should desire to raise up unto himself a righteous seed, He would command His people to that effect. Plainly setting forth that a time would come when He would command His people to do so.

It is necessary that this principle should be practiced under the auspices and control of the priesthood. God has placed that priesthood in the Church to govern and control all the affairs thereof, and this is a principle which, if not practiced in the greatest holiness and purity, might lead men into great sin, therefore the priesthood is the more necessary to guide and control men in the practice of this principle. There might be circumstances and situations in which it would not be wisdom in the mind of God for His people to practice this principle, but so long as a people are guided by the priesthood and revelations of God there is no danger of evil arising, therefore. If we, as a people, had attempted to practice this principle without revelation, it is likely that we should have been led into grievous sins and the condemnation of God would have rested upon us; but the Church waited until the proper time came, and then the people practiced it according to the mind and will of God, making a sacrifice of

their own feelings in so doing. But the history of the world goes to prove that the practice of this principle even by nations ignorant of the gospel has resulted in greater good to them than the practice of monogamy or the one-wife system in the so-called Christian nations. To-day, Christendom holds itself and its institutions aloft as a pattern for all men to follow. If you travel throughout the United States and through the nations of Europe in which Christianity prevails, and talk with the people about their institutions, they will boast of them as being the most permanent, indestructible and progressive of any institutions existing upon the earth; yet it is a fact well known to historians, that the Christian nations of Europe are the youngest nations on the globe. Where are the nations that have existed from time immemorial? They are not to be found in Christian monogamic Europe, but in Asia, among the polygamic races, —China, Japan, Hindostan and the various races of that vast continent. Those nations, from the most remote times, practiced plural marriage handed down to them by their forefathers. Although they are looked upon by the nations of Europe as semi-civilized, you will not find among them, woman prostituted, debased and degraded as she is through Christendom. She may be treated coldly, and degraded, but among them, except where the Christian element prevails to a large extent, she is not debased and polluted, as she is among the so-called Christian nations. It is a fact worthy of note that the shortest-lived nations of which we have record have been monogamic. Rome, with her arts, sciences and warlike instincts, was once the mistress of the world; but her glory faded. She was a monogamic nation, and the numerous evils attending that system early laid the foundation for that ruin which eventually overtook her. The strongest sayings of Jesus recorded in the New Testament, were levelled against the dreadful corruptions practiced in Rome and wherever the Romans held sway. The leaven of their institutions had worked its way into the Jewish nation, Jewry or Palestine being then a Roman province, and governed by Roman officers, who brought with them their wicked institutions, and Jesus denounced the practices which prevailed here.

A few years before the birth of the Savior Julius Cæsar was First Consul at Rome; he aimed at and obtained imperial power. He had four wives during his life, and committed numerous adulteries. His first wife he married early; but, becoming ambitious, the alliance did not suit him and, as the Roman law did not permit him to retain her and to marry another, he put her away. He then married the daughter of a consul, thinking to advance his interests thereby. She died, and a third was married. The third was divorced, and he married a fourth, with whom he was living at the time he was murdered. His grand-nephew, the Emperor Augustus Cæsar, reigned at the time of the birth of Christ. He is alluded to in history as one of the greatest of the Cæsars; he also had four wives. He divorced one after another, except the last, who outlived him. These men were not singular in this practice; it was common in Rome; the Romans did not believe in plurality of wives, but in divorcing them; in taking wives for convenience and putting them away when they got tired of them. In our country divorces are increasing, yet Roman like, men expect purity and chastity from their wives they do not practice themselves. You recollect, doubtless, the famous answer of Cæsar when his wife was accused of an intrigue with an infamous man. Some one asked Cæsar why he had put away his wife. Said he, "the wife of Cæsar must not only be incorrupt but unsuspected." He could not bear to have the virtue of his wife even suspected, yet his own life was infamous in the extreme. He was a seducer, adulterer and is reported to have practiced even a worse crime, yet he expected his wife to possess a virtue which, in his highest and holiest moments, was utterly beyond his conception in his own life.

This leaven was spreading itself over every country where the Roman Empire had jurisdiction. It had reached Palestine in the days of the Savior, hence by understanding the practices prevalent in those times amongst that people, you will be better able to appreciate the strong language used by Jesus against putting away, or divorcing wives. Rome continued to practice corruption until she fell beneath the weight of it, and was overwhelmed, not by another mo-

nogamic race, but by the vigorous polygamic hordes from the north, who swept away Roman imperialism, establishing in the place thereof institutions of their own. But they speedily fell into the same habit of having one wife and multitudes of courtizans, and soon, like Rome, fell beneath their own corruptions.

When courtizans were taught every accomplishment and honored with the society of the leading men of the nation, and wives were deprived of these privileges, is it any wonder that Rome should fall? or that the more pure, or barbarous nations, as they were called, overwhelmed and destroyed her?

I have had it quoted to me many times that no great nations ever practiced plural marriage. They who make such an assertion are utterly ignorant of history. What nations have left the deepest impress on the history of our race? Those which have practiced plurality of marriage. They have prevented the dreadful crime of prostitution by allowing men to have more wives than one. I know we are dazzled by the glory of Christendom; we are dazzled with the glory of our own age. Like every generation that has preceded it, the present generation thinks it is the wisest and best, and nearer to God than any which has preceded it. This is natural; it is a weakness of human nature. This is the case with nations as well as generations. China, to-day, calls all western nations "outside barbarians." Japan, Hindostan and all other polygamic nations do the same, and in very many respects they have as much right to say that of the monogamic nations, as the latter have to say it of them.

I heard a traveler remark a few days ago, while in conversation with him, "I have traveled through Asia Minor and Turkey, and I have blushed many times when contrasting the practices and institutions of those people with those of my own country," the United States. He was a gentleman with whom I had a discussion some years ago on the principle of plural marriage. He has traveled a good deal since then, and he remarked to me: "Travel enlarges a man's head and his heart. I have learned a great many things since we had a discussion together, and I have modified my views and opinions very materially with regard to the excellence

of the institutions, habits and morals which prevail in Christendom." This gentleman told me that among those nations, which we call semi-civilized, there are no drinking saloons, no brothels, nor drunkenness; and an entire absence of many other evils which exist in our own nation. I think this testimony, coming from a man who, previously, had such strong prejudices, was very valuable. He is not the only one who has borne this testimony, but all reliable travelers, who have lived in Oriental nations, vouch for the absence of those monstrous evils which flourish in and fatten and fester upon the vitals of all civilized or Christian nations.

In speaking of Utah and this peculiar practice amongst its people it is frequently said, "look at the Turks and other Oriental nations and see how women are degraded and debased among them, and deprived of many privileges which they enjoy among us!" But if it be true that woman does not occupy her true position among those nations, is this not more attributable to their rejection of the gospel than to their practice of having a plurality of wives? Whatever her condition may be there, however, I do not therefore accept, as a necessary conclusion, that she must be degraded among us. We have received the gospel of the Lord Jesus, the principles of which elevate all who honor them, and will impart to our sisters every blessing necessary to make them noble and good in the presence of God and man.

Look at the efforts which are being made to elevate the sex among the Latter-day Saints! See the privileges that are given them, and listen to the teachings imparted to them day by day, week by week, and year by year, to encourage them to press forward in the march of improvement! The elevation of the sex must follow as a result of these instructions. The practice in the world is to select a few of the sex and to elevate them. There is no country in the world, probably, where women are idolized to the extent they are in the United States. But is the entire sex in the United States thus honored and respected? No; it is not. Any person who will travel, and observe while he is traveling, will find that thousands of women are degraded and treated as something very vile, and are terribly debased in consequence of the practices of men towards them. But the

gospel of Jesus, and the revelations which God has given unto us concerning Patriarchial Marriage have a tendency to elevate the entire sex, and give all the privilege of being honored matrons and respected wives. There are no refuse among us,—no class to be cast out, scorned and condemned; but every woman who chooses, can be an honored wife and move in society in the enjoyment of every right which woman should enjoy to make her the equal of man as far as she can be his equal.

This is the result of the revelations of the gospel unto us, and the effect of the preaching and practice of this principle in our midst. I know, however, that there are those who shrink from this, who feel their hearts rebel against the principle, because of the equality which it bestows on the sex. They would like to be the honored few,—the aristocrats of society as it were, while their sisters might perish on every hand around them. They would not, if they could, extend their hands to save their sisters from a life of degradation. This is wrong and a thing which God is displeased at. He has revealed this principle and commanded His servants to take wives. What for? That they may obey His great command,—a command by which Eternity is peopled, a command by which Abraham's seed shall become as the stars of heaven for multitude, and as the sand on the sea shore, that cannot be counted. He has given to us this command, and shall we, the sterner sex, submit to all the difficulties and trials entailed in carrying it out? Shall we submit to all the afflictions and labor incident to this life to save our sisters, while many of you who are of the same sex, whose hearts ought to beat for their salvation as strongly as ours do, will not help us? I leave you all to answer. There is a day of reckoning coming when you will be held accountable as well as we. Every woman in this Church should join heart and hand in this great work, which has for its result, the redemption of the sexes, both male and female. No woman should slacken her hand or withhold her influence, but every one should seek by prayer and faith unto God for the strength and grace necessary to enable her to do so. "But," says one, "is not this a trial, and does it not inflict upon us unnecessary trials?" There are afflic-

tions and trials connected with this principle. It is necessary there should be. Is there any law that God reveals unattended with a trial of some kind? Think of the time, you who are adults, and were born in the nations, when you joined the Church. Think of the trials connected with your espousal of the gospel. Did it not try you to go forth and be baptized? Did it not try you, when called upon to gather, to leave your homes and nearest and dearest friends, as many of you have done? Did it not try you to do a great many things you have been required to do in the gospel? Every law of the gospel has a trial connected with it, and the higher the law the greater the trial; and as we ascend nearer and nearer to the Lord our God we shall have greater trials to contend with in purifying ourselves before Him. He has helped us this far. He has helped us to conquer our selfish feelings, and when our sisters seek unto Him He helps them to overcome their feelings; He gives them strength to overcome their selfishness and jealousy. There is not a woman under the sound of my voice to-day, but can bear witness of this, if she has tried it. You, sisters, whose husbands have taken other wives, can you not bear testimony that the principle has purified your hearts, made you less selfish, brought you nearer to God and given you power you never had before? There are hundreds within the sound of my voice to-day, both men and women, who can testify that this has been the effect that the practice of this principle has had upon them.

I am speaking now of what are called the spiritual benefits arising from the righteous practice of this principle. I am sure that, through the practice of this principle, we shall have a purer community, a community more experienced, less selfish and with a higher knowledge of human nature than any other on the face of the earth. It has already had this effect to a great extent, and its effects in these directions will increase as the practice of the principle becomes more general.

A lady visitor remarked to me not long ago in speaking upon this subject: "Were I man, I would feel differently probably to what I do; to your sex the institution cannot be so objectionable." This may be the case to some extent,

but the practice of this principle is by no means without its trials for the males. The difficulties and perplexities connected with the care of a numerous family, to a man who has any ambition, are so great that nothing short of the revelations of God or the command of Jesus Christ, would tempt men to enter this order; the mere increase of facilities to gratify the lower passions of our natures would be no inducement to assume such an increase of grave responsibilities. These desires have been implanted in both male and female for a wise purpose, but their immoderate and illegal gratification is a source of evil equal to that system of repression prevalent in the world, to which thousands must submit or criminate themselves.

Just think, in the single State of Massachusetts, at the last census, there were 63,011 females more than males. Brother Pratt, in his remarks on this subject truly remarked that the law of Massachusetts makes these 63,011 females either old maids or prostitutes, for that law says they shall not marry a man who has a wife. Think of this! And the same is true to a greater or less degree throughout all the older States, for the females preponderate in every one.

Thus far I have referred only to the necessity and benefit of this principle being practiced in a moral point of view. I have said nothing about the physiological side of the question. This is one of, if not the strongest source of argument in its favor; but I do not propose to enter into that branch of the subject to any great extent on the present occasion.

We are all, both men and women, physiologists enough to know that the procreative powers of man endure much longer than those of woman. Granting, as some assert, that an equal number of the sexes exist, what would this lead to? Man must practice that which is vile and low or submit to a system of repression; because if he be married to a woman who is physically incapable, he must either do himself violence or what is far worse, he must have recourse to the dreadful and damning practice of having illegal connection with women, or become altogether like the beasts. Do you not see that if these things were introduced among our society they would be pregnant with the worst results? The greatest conceivable evils would result therefrom! How dreadful are the con-

sequences of this system of which I am now speaking, as witnessed at the present time throughout all the nations of Christendom! You may see them on every hand. Yet the attempt is being continually made to bring us to the same standard, and to compel us to share the same evils.

When the principle of plurality of wives was revealed I was but a boy. While reflecting on the subject of the sealing power which was then being taught, the case of Jacob, who had four wives, occurred to me, and I immediately concluded that the time would come when light connected with this practice would be revealed to us as a people. I was therefore prepared for the principle when it was revealed, and I know it is true on the principle that I know that baptism, the laying on of hands, the gathering, and everything connected with the gospel is true. If there were no books in existence, if the revelation itself were blotted out, and there was nothing written in its favor, extant among men, still I could bear testimony for myself that I know this is a principle which, if practiced in purity and virtue, as it should be, will result in the exaltation and benefit of the human family; and that it will exalt woman until she is redeemed from the effects of the Fall, and from that curse pronounced upon her in the beginning. I believe the correct practice of this principle will redeem woman from the effects of that curse,—namely, “thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” All the evils connected with jealousy have their origin in this. It is natural for woman to cleave to man; it was pronounced upon her in the beginning, seemingly as a punishment. I believe the time will come when, by the practice of the virtuous principles which God has revealed, woman will be emancipated from that punishment and that feeling. Will she cease to love man? No, it is not necessary for her to cease to love.

How is it among the nations of the earth? Why, women, in their yearning after the other sex and in their desire for maternity, will do anything to gratify that instinct of their nature, and yield to anything and be dishonored even rather than not gratify it; and in consequence of that which has been pronounced upon them, they are not held accountable to

the same extent as men are. Man is strong, he is the head of woman, and God will hold him responsible for the use of the influence he exercises over the opposite sex. Hence we were told by Brother Pratt that there are degrees of glory, and that the faithful man may receive the power of God,—the greatest He has ever bestowed upon man—namely, the power of procreation. It is a godlike power, but how it is abused! How men debase themselves and the other sex by its unlawful and improper exercise! We were told there is a glory to which alone that power will be accorded in the life to come. Still there will be millions of women saved in the kingdom of God, while men, through the abuse of this precious gift, will not be counted worthy of such a privilege. And this very punishment will, in the end, be woman's salvation, because she is not held accountable to the same degree that men are.

This is a subject that we would all do well to reflect upon. There are many points connected with the question, physiologically, that might be dwelt upon with great advantage. I have heard it said, and seen it printed, that the children born here under this system are not so smart as others; that their eyes lack lustre and that they are dull in intellect; and many strangers, especially ladies, when arriving here, are anxious to see the children, having read accounts which have led them to expect that most of the children born here are deficient. But the testimony of Professor Park, the principal of the University of Deseret, and of other leading teachers of the young here, is that they never saw children with greater aptitude for the acquisition of knowledge than the children raised in this Territory. There are no brighter children to be found in the world than those born in this Territory. Under the system of Patriarchal Marriage, the offspring, besides being equally as bright and brighter intellectually, are much more healthy and strong. Need I go into particulars to prove this? To you who are married there is no necessity of doing so; you know what I mean. You all know that many women are sent to the grave prematurely through the evils they have to endure from their husbands during pregnancy and lactation, and that their children often sustain irremediable injury.

Another good effect of the institution

here is that you may travel throughout our entire Territory, and virtue prevails. Our young live virtuously until they marry. But how is it under the monogamic system? Temptations are numerous on every hand and young men fall a prey to vice. An eminent medical professor in New York, recently declared, while delivering a lecture to his class in one of the colleges there, that if he wanted a man twenty-five years of age, free from a certain disease, he would not know where to find him. What a terrible statement to make! In this community no such thing exists. Our boys grow up in purity, honoring and respecting virtue; our girls do the same; and the great mass of them are pure. There may be impurities. We are human, and it would not be consistent with our knowledge of human nature to say that we are entirely pure, but we are the most pure of any people within the confines of the Republic. We have fewer unvirtuous boys and girls in our midst than any other community within the range of my knowledge. Both sexes grow up in vigor, health and purity.

These, my brethren and sisters, are some of the results which I wanted to allude to in connection with this subject. Much more might be said. There is not a man or woman who has listened to me to-day, but he and she have thoughts, reasons and arguments to sustain this principle passing through their minds which I have not touched upon, or if touched upon at all, in a very hasty manner.

The question arises, what is going to be done with this institution? Will it be overcome? The conclusion arrived at long ago is that it is God and the people for it. God has revealed it, He must sustain it, we can not; we can not bear it off, He must. I know that Napoleon said Providence was on the side of the heaviest artillery, and many men think that God is on the side of the strongest party. The Midianites probably thought, so when Gideon fell upon them with three hundred men. Sennacherib and the Assyrians thought so when they came down in their might to blot out Israel. But God is mighty; God will prevail; God will sustain that which He has revealed, and He will uphold and strengthen His servants and bear off His people. We need not be afflicted by a doubt; a shadow of doubt need not cross

our minds as to the result. We know that God can sustain us; He has borne off His people in triumph thus far and will continue to do so.

I did intend, when I got up, to say something in relation to the effects of the priesthood; but as the time is so far gone, I feel that if I say anything it must be very brief. But in connection with the subject of plural marriage, the priesthood is intimately interwoven. It is the priesthood which produces the peace, harmony, good order, and everything which make us as a people peculiar, and for which our Territory has become remarkable. It is that principle—the priesthood, which governs the heavenly hosts. God and Jesus rule through this power, and through it we are made, so far as we have received it and rendered obedience to its mandates, like our Heavenly Father and God. He

is our Father and our God; He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; He is the Father of all the inhabitants of the earth, and we inherit His divinity, if we choose to seek for and cultivate it. We inherit His attributes; we can, by taking the proper course, inherit the priesthood by which He exercises control; by which the heavenly orbs in the immensity of space are governed, and by which the earth revolves in its seasons. It is the Holy Priesthood that controls all the creations of the Gods, and though men fight against it, and, if they could, would blot it out of existence, it will prevail and go on increasing in power and strength until the sceptre of Jesus is acknowledged by all, and the earth is redeemed and sanctified.

That this day may be brought about speedily, is my prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.



Book

9